

Amendments to the drawings:

Figure 2 is amended to correct the lead line for reference sign 30 as shown in the attached replacement sheet. Figure 3 is amended to add reference sign 30 as shown in the attached replacement sheet.

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 3-13 are pending in this application. By this Amendment claims 1, 9 and 10 are amended. Additionally, Figure 2 is amended to correct the erroneous correction made to Figure 2 in the August 23, 2004 Amendment. Figure 3 is also amended to further clarify which surface is axial end face 30.

In the Office Action, the specification was objected to. By this Amendment, the independent claims are amended to remove the language added to them in the Amendment filed August 23, 2004. As a result, it is respectfully submitted that the objection is moot and should be withdrawn.

In the Office Action, claims 1-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. By this Amendment, the amendments made to claims 1, 9 and 10 in the August 23, 2004 Amendment are reversed, returning claims 1, 9 and 10 to their condition prior to the August 23, 2004 Amendment. As a result, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection is moot and should be withdrawn.

It is respectfully submitted that the amendment made to paragraph 16 of the specification by the August 23, 2004 Amendment (in conjunction with the corrected amendment made to Figure 2) addresses the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, in the April 21, 2004 Office Action. Support for the amendments made to paragraph 16 and Figure 2 exists in Figure 1 where the annular sealing body 2 is shown contacting the axial end face 30 of the recess 10 of the slide ring 4.

In light of the above, the Examiner is respectfully requested to address the arguments made by the Applicant in the August 23, 2004 Amendment regarding the prior

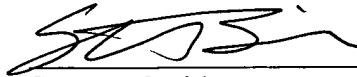
art rejections of the April 21, 2004 Office Action. In considering these arguments, it is noted that none of the cited references teaches or suggests the wherein clause of the independent claims, namely, a radially inward-oriented extension of an annular sealing body contacting an axial end face of a recess of an axial extending leg of a slide ring.

In view of the forgoing, it is respectfully submitted that the application, including claims 1 and 3-13, is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and prompt allowance are respectfully requested.

If the Examiner is of the opinion that the prosecution of the application would be advanced by a personal interview, he is invited to telephone undersigned counsel and arrange for such an interview.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: 3/3/05


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